THE WHISTLING BOY.

O Bedouin, lithe, barefooted and blithe, the rollicking melody
Which through thy lips so lightsome slips is the ballad of "Rosalie,
The Prairie Flower," and gracious power, within the ancient tune,
Brings back the day when I rode away, in the buxom month of June,
When the slender stalks of the hollyhocks lifted the blooms so high
Above the wall that they shouted all: "Good-by, my lover, good-by,"
And in tunic yellow, a wild bird mellow, and mad with tipsy joy,
Tilted the rhyme of his tuneful chime to the lilt of a whistling boy.

No meadow lark in the misty dark, when winging her upward way
From cloud to cloud, and carolling loud, to waken the sleeping day,
No whip-poor-will, in the twilight still, lamenting in lonely shade,
Where fireflies seek for her and peek into every glimmering glade,
No slave refrain, with a warp of pain and a weft of psalm between,
No aria trilled, to audience thrilled, by the art of the opera queen,
No shepherd's hail in a hawthorn vale, no mariner's "Home ahoy,"
Wets my eyes like thoughts that rise with the lilt of a whistling boy.

Through my happy tears, across the years, on the upland farm I see,
Driving his line of lowing kine the laddie that once was me,
Whistling clear to the thrushes near that cheery, quaint old strain,
Loitering slow, in the long ago, up the blossoming orchard lane.
We know that some, when death has come, and all life's toil is o'er,
On the river brim have heard a hymn float up from the farther shore,
But at Charon's ford, one low, sweet chord, will all my fear destroy,
If over the tide, from the otherside, comes the lit of a whistling boy.
—Robert McIntyre, in Chicago Times-Herald.

From Clue to Climax.

BY WILL N. HARBEN.

CHAPTER V.—CONTINUED.

It was a strange, wierd air, that Lilian played, and she played it with skill and power. The others listened silently for a few moments; then Mrs. Roundtree said to the mayor:

"We really must not talk about that affair before her; her mind has been dwelling on it all day. She has been to me three times to say that it would be quite natural for such a criminal to desire to be revenged on you for offering the reward. She tries to hide her interest in the subject, but it shows itself every minute. She was so eager to hear the news that she went down to the gate to meet the newsboy with the afternoon paper, and I had to speak to her twice to get her attention after she had read the account of the crime. Listen to her music! Can't you detect her nervousness in her playing? She doesn't play that way usually. Hush! she has stopped!"

"It is tea-time," said Lilian, coming to the door. "Why don't you come in?"

With a solicitous expression on his face, Fred Walters rose, and, putting his arm around her slender waist, led her before the others into the dining-room. She was tall and graceful and quite pretty. Her eyes were large and hazel, her hair light brown and abundant. Her feet were small and well shaped, her hands long, tapering and strong-looking.

The family talked of other things than the murder during the meal, but Lilian took no part in what was said. She ate slowly and daintily and seemed thoughtful. After tea, Marion, his father and mother and Fred Walters had a game of whist in the drawing-room. Lilian had never liked the game. She improvised some soft airs on the piano, and then rose and went out on the veranda. Through the open window her mother could see her chair rocking back and forth. Later Mrs. Roundtree became interested in the game, and did not think of her daughter for half an hour. When the game was finished, she looked towards Lilian's chair. It was vacant.

"Why, where is Lilian?" the mother asked, excitedly. "She was on the veranda just now." Mrs. Roundtree called the girl's name aloud, but there was no reply.

They all rose hurriedly and went to the door, vaguely alarmed.

"Lilian! Lilian!" Mrs. Roundtree called from the veranda.

"Here I am, mother."

The reply came from down the walk among the boxwood-and-rose-bushes. "I am coming; don't be frightened."

"Why, my child, how can you be so imprudent?" cried Mrs. Roundtree, as the girl came into the light of the gas in the hall. Lilian was trying to conceal something under the light shawl she wore, and walked rather awkwardly as she came up the steps. As her husband approached her, she retreated into the shadow of the wall near the door. Then suddenly she broke into a low, mechanical laugh.

"The truth is," she said, seeing that the others were waiting for an explanation of her actions, "I came near having an adventure. I saw a man climb over the fence down by the rose-bushes. I knew he had no business there, and—"

"You went down there?" her mother gasped.

The girl laughed coldly and drew a revolver from beneath her shawl. "I ran up and got Fred's revolver. I was not afraid. I knew—I don't know how I knew it, but I was sure he was not armed, and that if I could catch him I could frighten him into submission." She swung the revolver to and fro skillfully in her strong fingers. "But he got away. He sprang over the fence and ran as soon as he saw me. I would have fired at him, but I knew he was beyond range, and that the report would frighten you out of your wits."

The group stood motionless and silent for a moment. Then Fred Walters drew a long breath, as he stepped towards his wife with extended hand.

"Give it to me," he said, in a strange, imperative tone.

With a sudden look of defiance, she held the revolver behind her, and as he drew nearer she threw it over the balustrade into the flower-beds.

"I did not mean to do that," she cried, impulsively, then she was doggedly silent.

Fred Walters went down the steps, picked up the revolver, and came back examining it in the light.

"It's loaded," he said under his breath to the mayor.

"Of course it's loaded," the girl blurted out. "Do you think I'd go down there to meet a—a red-handed murderer with an unloaded revolver?" Then, with a deep flush on her face, she passed through the light at the door and resumed her seat in the rocking chair before the window.

"My darling—" began Mrs. Roundtree, finding her voice at last, and advancing towards her.

"Don't call me pet names!" broke in the young wife. "Women are such weak beings that the moment one of us does a sensible thing she is reproved. I am not afraid—really afraid—of any creature that ever walked on the earth. I only did what Fred or papa would have done. Why, I am a better shot than Fred, and he knows it. Let's talk of something else."

Without another word the mayor and his wife and son left Fred Walters with Lilian and went into the drawing-room.

"She has always been a strange creature," sighed Mrs. Roundtree, "but she has never acted so queerly before. Oh, I'm very much afraid she and Fred will not get along well together. They are so different. Don't you think he looked a little vexed just now, dear?"

"More surprised than anything else, I thought," replied the mayor.

Just then Fred and his wife passed the door, going towards the stairs. "There are two sides to the question," Lilian was saying. "Would you mind keeping yours to yourself?"

Fred looked in with a flushed face. "We are going to bed," he said. "She will be all right in the morning. I had no business to teach her to shoot."

CHAPTER VI.

Late in the night Mrs. Roundtree was awakened by a light touch on her brow.

"It is I, mamma; don't be frightened." And Lilian sat down on the side of the bed. "I have not been able to sleep for—for my hasty words this evening. If you will forgive me I can go back to bed and sleep."

Mrs. Roundtree drew her face down and kissed it.

"There is nothing to forgive, darling," she answered. "But why have you got on that heavy wrap, and—why, I declare, it's damp! Have you—surely you have not been out again?"

The girl drew herself up stiffly and was silent for a moment. The room was faintly lighted by the moonbeams; but Mrs. Roundtree could not see her face.

"No, I have not been out," she said hesitatingly at first, and then, speaking more rapidly, "but I have been sitting at the open window, and the dew may have fallen on me from the vines."

"But why have you been up, dear?"

"Because I could not sleep and did not want to disturb Fred by my restlessness. And—and then, mother, to tell the truth, I was not certain that the man I saw might not come back again. Now, don't be frightened, but I am pretty sure that it was the murderer, and that he has designs against us. It would be the most natural thing in the world. Father's offer of a big reward is like an open challenge to him. The man who wrote those notes and did that deed is deep and cunning, and I don't believe he'll be easily caught."

Mrs. Roundtree sat up in bed and put her arm around her daughter. "Oh, dear, you don't know how miserable your talk makes me. You speak and act so queerly! Go back to bed and try to sleep. You have thought of all this till it has unnerved you."

The girl coldly drew herself from her mother's embrace and stood away from her.

"I was never calmer — absolutely never calmer—in my life," she said, quickly. She stared at her mother for a moment; then she stepped towards her with an arm outstretched. "You know when the pulse of anyone is excited. Feel mine. No, you have got to do it I am serious. I will not be accused of being agitated when I am as calm as I can be. Feel it, I say!"

Mrs. Roundtree was obliged to take her wrist and press her trembling fingers on the veins.

"You see," the girl went on, "I am not excited; but you are, for you are quivering all over. Lie down and go to sleep again. I am sorry I waked you." And she turned and went out of the room.

The next morning, while the family were at breakfast, James, the butler, brought a folded paper to the mayor. He said he had found it among the rose bushes near the gate. It was typewritten, and addressed to "Mayor Roundtree." As he opened it Mrs. Roundtree turned pale and Fred Walters stared fixedly at him. Lilian did not seem to have noticed the man's entrance, nor did she seem to hear her mother say: "What is it, dear?" as she leaned towards her husband. The mayor finished the note and mutely handed it to his wife. Fred Walters got up and stood behind Mrs. Roundtree's chair, reading the note over her shoulder.

"Bring me a hot roll, Jane," said Mrs. Walters to the girl who was waiting at the table. Then she seemed to notice that Fred had moved from her side. "Why, Fred!" she said, "is it polite to look over mamma's letters?"

A look of deep concern was on Walters' face. He came back to his chair without replying. The mayor took the sheet of paper, put it into his pocket, and awkwardly resumed his breakfast.

"Something I've no hand in, that's plain," said Lilian. "Well, I don't care, you've always tried to make a baby of me." Then her color rose suddenly as she added: "But I know what it is as well as you do. It is a communication from the man who was prowling round the house last night. I wish I had shot him."

A deep silence followed her remark. Fred Walters looked at her with a pained, puzzled expression, and as he saw that she was folding her napkin preparatory to leaving, he put out his hand to detain her, but she pushed it away impatiently. "Keep the matter to yourselves," she said, angrily. "You all have so much more intelligence than I have."

After she had left the room no one spoke for several minutes. The mayor took the note from his pocket and silently reread it. It was as follows:

"Dear Sir:

"Make your reward $500,000, and even then you would never capture me. That was a rash thing for you to do. Look to the safety of your family. You'll never know the moment it will happen. Your case shall receive my earliest consideration.

"ONE WHO KNOWS HIS BUSINESS."

"What are you going to do?" Mrs. Roundtree faltered, rising with her husband.

"Take it to the police and that New York detective," he answered. "It's all I can do, and that's my duty."

"I would not go out so early," said Mrs. Roundtree. "Do you think it will be safe to leave us alone?"

"Fred can stay; I shall not let this make any difference in my usual habits. Besides, I think it is only an idle threat."

"Yes, I will stay," Walters agreed. "I don't like to leave Lilian, anyway; she is not well; she has not finished her breakfast."

"Had you not better ask the police to guard our house? We are so isolated, you know." And in her deep anxiety Mrs. Roundtree leaned heavily on her husband's arm.

"I shall ask the police and Mr. Hendricks about that, and shall do as they advise. I'd better go down at once."

CHAPTER VII.

A week went by. The body of Richard N. Strong had been buried, and Alfred Whidby was considered the legal possessor of his effects. Whidby had not been seen on the streets or at his club since the murder. It was on the eighth day after the burial that Col. Warrenton called to see him. He was shown up to Whidby's room.

The young man rose from the table at which he was writing, and shook hands with his friend. He was pale, thin and nervous. His eyes were sunken, his hair and dress untidy.

"Still up here in your new quarters," said the colonel, sweeping the rather

"I was never calmer—"

small room with a glance. "I thought you'd move back to your old room."

Whidby shuddered. "I don't care to sleep there; by Jove, I don't believe I could close my eyes."

The two men had taken seats opposite each other, and the lawyer emphasized his next remark by laying his hand firmly on Whidby's knee. "My boy, this will never do. You'd never make a soldier. You've got to rouse yourself and shake it off. You'll lose your reason if you go brooding over this thing. To tell the truth, you are looking worse and worse every day. Did you sleep last night?"

"About two hours, all told," replied Whidby. "I know I am in bad shape. I can see it and feel it."

"Look here, my boy," the colonel slapped Whidby's knee soundly, "I want you to pull up and take a trip to Europe. It will give you a change of scene and something else to think about. You'll be a new man in a month."

Whidby rose and began to place his papers in order on the table. "I'd never be able to think of anything else, no matter where I was; and then it would be like running away; by Jove, it would be running away. I am sure that I've done wrong in keeping back that matter from Hendricks. It's cowardly."

"You could tell them nothing that would help them, and it would only place you under deeper suspicion," the lawyer replied.

"My God! I'd just as soon be in a prison cell as here under the awful uncertainty as to whether I did it or not."

"What did you say? What do you mean?"

Whidby walked slowly from the table and laid his hand on his friend's shoulder.

"I am afraid I had something to do with the murder. I can't figure it out any other way. The blood on the curtain; the stain you found on the chair; my dim recollection of taking hold of the chair; the drop of blood on my cuff—why, my hand—it was the right hand, you know—must have been absolutely wet with it."

"Are you fool enough to think you could have killed a man in your sleep without being conscious of the act? Besides, remember the smile on Strong's face; you're obliged to admit—"

"That's exactly what puts me on this line," Whidby interrupted. "I noticed in a New York paper an interview with Dr. Henry Lampkin, the famous hypnotic expert, in which he said casually that from what he read of the case he judged that my uncle was hypnotized by the murderer. Well, Warrenton, I am sure if I were to tell him what occurred to me that night he would say that I was also hypnotized—that—perhaps—I was made to do the deed for some one else. Such things have been done. Old man, that is what is troubling me. It is awful!"

There was silence for a moment; then the colonel said:

"I'll tell you what I would do, Alfred. I don't think you could have been under any influence that night; but if you are going to brood over the matter this way till you are insane, I propose that we have Dr. Lampkin to come down here and give us his opinion. He is said to be a wonderful man, and he may, at all events, give you some peace of mind. He is said to be making marvelous cures among intemperate people, and children naturally depraved, through what he calls hypnotic suggestion. From what I hear of him I believe he can be trusted even in such a delicate matter as this."

Whidby's face brightened. "That's just what I want," he said. "Anything is better than suspense. He may be able to tell me whether I actually did the deed. If he can assure me that it was not my hand that held the knife, he is welcome to every dollar of my uncle's estate."

"Oh, he won't break us; his prices are not high; he does a great deal for no pay at all. But I shall write him at once, and report to you as soon as his reply comes. I believe hypnotism is a wonderful thing, but something tells me that it could not be carried to the extent you fear. Besides, you may not have been hypnotized at all; you may have been slightly disturbed by the fellow's movements in Strong's room, and got up half awake and gone—after the murder—to his bed to reassure yourself. It may have been then that you got your hands in the blood without knowing it."

"Ah, you give me the first bit of hope I have had," cried Whidby. "Write to him at once. I wish he were here now."

"I'll get him as soon as he can come," the colonel promised, and he rose to go. At the door he turned back.

"I am trying to work up a little clew for myself," he said. "I am fond of this sort of thing. I'd give anything to beat this expert detective and run our man to the ground without consulting him. By the way, you and I might try to think of some motive for the crime. The others are doubtless losing valuable time in suspecting you. Now, do you happen to remember if your uncle ever had an enemy?"

"Not that I know of," Whidby answered. "I don't think he could. He was an easy-going man, and lived very quietly—that is, since I have known him. Years ago, when he was a young man, I believe he had rather an adventurous life in the gold-mines out west somewhere. You know he made his start there. He has never told me much about those days. In fact, I have often thought he was oddly silent on the subjet. It seems to have been the only part of his history that he has not talked to me freely about."

"Do you know of any poor relation that may have troubled him for aid in any way?"

"No. But why do you ask? I don't understand."

"I can't tell you now, but I am searching for a motive for the crime. Even if you could have been hypnotized, there would still have to be a motive for the crime. If the murderer was a skillful hypnotist he was no fool, and the motive must have been a strong one. But I see you are getting the blues again. Brace up. Good-by: I shall see you tomorrow."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Has a Rubber Back.

"A cat will fall on its feet always, while a coon will always land on its back," commented an old hunter as we galloped through one of the mountain hollows in southwestern Missouri. "I s'pose the reason is obvious. A coon has an Inje rubber back."

"A rubber back?" incredulously.

"Sure's you're born. A coon'll fall from the topmost branch of the tallest tree on its back every time. The fall would kill any other animal. How about the coon? He just bunches up in the air about 25 feet like a rubber ball and comes down on a dog's neck. Why, I've seen a coon bound like a baby's rubber ball.

"I have been told—I've never seen it—that the coon's favorite amusement is bouncing. One'll drop from a tree and bounce; then another'll drop and bounce, and they'll keep that up by the hour. So I say a coon has a real rubber back." (All of which will not be found in any book on natural history.)—Detroit Free Press.

Just a Slight Mistake.

Pretty Mrs. Brown was wedded to her second husband and had a peculiar way of talking about her first and her second in the same breath, which was confusing to her listeners as well as to herself. One day she planned a birthday party as a surprise to Tom (her second). About an hour before the guests were to assemble to celebrate Tom's birthday, she could contain herself no longer and confided the secret to him. A troubled look stole over his face and he seemed greatly distressed to dampen her enthusiasm, but upon her questioning him as to his seeming distress he answered: "Why, my dear, this is Dick's birthday, not mine!"—Liverpool Mercury.

Just Shrewd Judgment.

She—I went to a fortune-teller to-day, just for a lark, and she told me a lot of things.

He—Yes, some of them hit it pretty closely, but I hope you don't think there is anything supernatural about their powers. They just use shrewd judgment; that is all.

"That may be true, dear. She told me I was married to a man who fell far short of what I deserve."—Indianapolis

Maidens and Widows.

By the old Saxon law a maiden and a widow were of different value. The latter could be bought for one-half the sum which the guardian of the maid was entitled to demand. A man, therefore, who could not afford to buy a maiden might, perhaps, be able to purchase a widow.

Medical Intelligence.

Col. Yerger—What is the matter? I never saw you look so distressed.

Judge Peterby—My wife is dangerously ill, and I am trembling between fear and hope.

"Who is treating her?"

"Dr. Soonover."

"Well, then, you can hope. He treated my late lamented." — Tammany Times.

Married Now.

Ah, once when Julia read aloud,
My doting soul was rapt and proud;
But now, although I love her more,
When Julia reads, I doze and snore.
—Chicago Record.

WHAT SHE WANTED.

He—Gracious! Miss Gertrude, I'm sorry you've hurt your hand. Shall I run and get some cold cream?

She—Ah—no—ah—ice cream will do. —St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

A Visit of Congratulations.

"What a lovely bouquet."

"Yes; I'm taking it to Mrs. Wells, as this is her birthday."

"But I thought you were not on very good terms with her now."

"Neither I am, but this is her fortieth birthday, and she knows that I am the only one who knows it."—Judy.

One Girl's Consolation.

When no one came her heart to win
It filled her full of woe,
But now she plays the violin,
And always has a bow.
—N. Y. Journal.

Unsatisfactory Answer.

"If I were to die, would you marry again?" said Mrs. Bickers to her husband.

"My dear," replied Mr. Bickers, "an able philosopher once said that no man should be called a hopeless fool until he had made a fool of himself twice in the same way."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

No Recommendation.

"Did you buy that horse Skeemer wanted to sell you?"

"No, sir-ee! Afraid of him."

"Didn't Skeemer say the ladies in his family drove him regularly?"

"Well, he said he let his wife's mother drive him every day." — Detroit Free Press.

How It Works.

"Why are you so anxious to marry?"

"To get a little liberty. An unmarried girl has practically none."

"And is George's reason the same?"

"N-o. I believe he is marrying because he has had too much. His father wants him to settle down."—Chicago Post.

Truly Grateful.

Minister (to elderly female crofter)—I'm sorry to hear your potatoes are very bad this year, Janet.

"'Deed they are, sir; but I've reason to be thankfu' to Providence that other folks are as badly off as mysel'."—Tit-Bits.

Two Ways to Win.

Foster—Look here, Felton! I took your advice on that horse Felldown, and I'm dead broke. I thought you said the owners were going to play him to win?

Felton—That's right. They did win. They bet against him.—Puck.

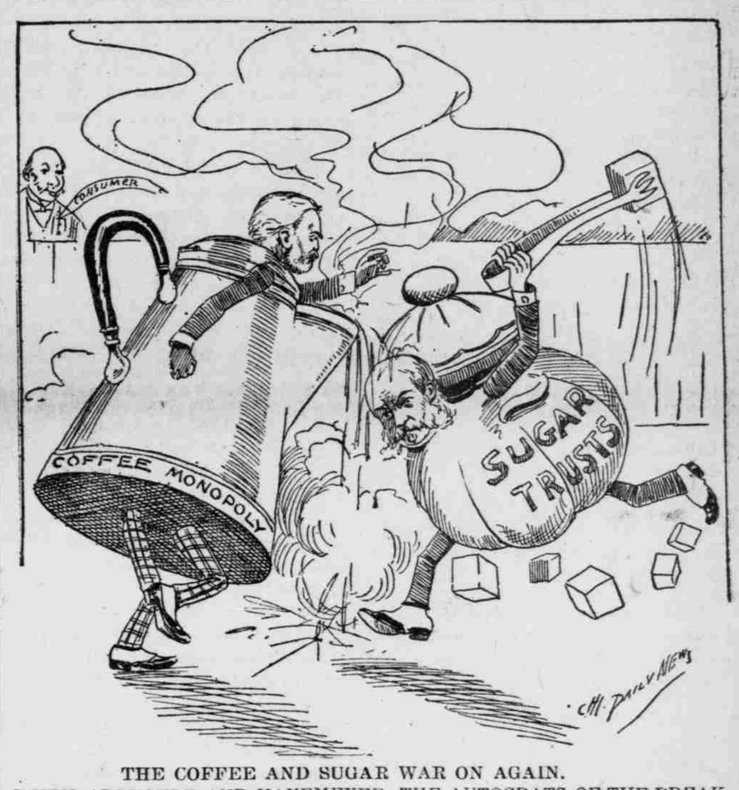
There Is a Difference.

"I can argue with anybody here," said the contentious man fiercely. "I can argue—"

"Oh, yes, you can argue," said the quiet little man in the corner; "the misfortune is that you can't reason."—Boston Traveler.

Their Mutual Affection.

He had a castle grand, ancestral—
Her acres are both broad and trim;
He loves the very ground she walks on,
And she adores the site of him.
—Pick-Me-Up.



THE COFFEE AND SUGAR WAR ON AGAIN.

WHEN ARBUCKLE AND HAVEMEYER, THE AUTOCRATS OF THE BREAKFAST TABLE, CLASH IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE PUBLIC MAY BE BENEFITTED.

Fragile.

He—Miss Roseleaf's complexion is very delicate.

She (without the least touch of malice, of course)—Very; I've known a single application of soap and water to ruin it.—Judge.

A Great Drawback.

"Why, I'd like to know," said a lady to a judge, "cannot a woman become a successful lawyer?"

"Because she's too fond of giving her opinion without pay," answered the judge.—Tit-Bits.

Family Troubles.

"The Skittles next door are not on speaking terms."

"What is the matter?"

"He told her he would go to Alaska and get rich, and then be backed out."—Detroit Free Press.

The Appropriate Remark.

"You should never say 'sweets to the sweet,' when you offer a girl refreshments," said Huggins to Kissam.

"What should I say?"

"An ice to a nice girl."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

A Mystery Explained.

Maud—What do you think of Miss High-Note's singing? It's entirely by ear.

Claud—Well, I was wondering how she managed to make such a frightful noise with her mouth.—Town Topics.

Knew He Would.

Minister (to tipsy man coming out of saloon)—My dear friend, you'll regret this some day.

Tipsy Man—Yes, I'll regret it in less than ten minutes. I'm going home to my wife.—Harlem Life.

Explicit Directions.

"Have you got anything in the way of a water color?" asker the caller.

"You'll find the milk dealer on the block below," was the reply.—Yonkers Statesman.

A Sensitive Soul.

Mine Host (to barmaid)—You must always fill up the judge's glass when it is empty without asking him whether he wants another. Otherwise he will feel offended.—Fliegende Blaetter.

The Bigger Half.

"I cannot understand," said the bachelor clerk, "why a man's wife is called the 'better half.'"

"You would," said the married clerk, "if you had to divide your salary with one."—Cincinnati Enquirer.

He Had Nine.

"A child in the house," said the Thoughtful Chap, "is a joy forever."

"Yes," remarked the Nonsensical Guy, somewhat sadly, "and I know people who are overjoyed."—Cincinnati Commercial-Tribune.

AFTER THE BALL.

Dudely Canesucker—There is only one hat left and it is not mine. I want my hat.

Hatkeeper—Was yours better?

"Of course it was. Do you suppose I'd have made a kick if it wasn't?"—N. Y. Weekly.

First Principles.

Zerega—Do you know, I once saw a colored ghost?

Plaza—Nonsense! How could you tell it was a colored ghost?

Zerega—It was chasing after a chicken.—Brooklyn Eagle.

Progression.

Father—When I was a boy, children had some respect for the advice of their parents.

Son—Yes; but in those days the children didn't know any more than their parents did.—N. Y. Truth.